

Beast T 601

Chapter 601: The Egg of the Five Saints! He managed to get it after all!

Su Ping looked at the others with some confusion.

He had also noticed the change in the others' expressions after Rong Bao, his nominal maternal grandfather, had spoken.

Egg of the Five Saints?

What was that?

Obviously, judging by the situation, it seemed no one was inclined to explain it to him.

Everyone was deep in thought, including Su Anyong beside him.

Only Rong Bao, Su Ping's nominal maternal grandfather, had a smile on his lips. He seemed to pay no attention to the varying expressions of the Rong Family members, maintaining his cheerful demeanor as if nothing had happened—as if he had just casually given a beloved younger family member a few hundred or a thousand yuan in New Year's money.

Even among the members of this great family, where most were deeply calculating, a few still occasionally appeared lost in thought after Rong Bao finished speaking.

The dinner reception for Su Ping, amidst such a special and awkward atmosphere, finally ended.

As night fell, Leng Ye had not left Su Ping's room, and Su Anyong was also there.

Surrounded by flickering lights, the three generations sat facing each other.

Leng Ye appeared completely unconcerned, while Su Anyong was frowning.

Back in the room, with the sound completely isolated by spiritual power, Su Anyong finally spoke, "Second Uncle, was it you who allowed Old Master Rong to make that decision?"

Leng Ye glanced sidelong at this brat who seemed to be questioning him and then said, "What's it got to do with me? That's just Old Ghost Rong's own little scheme. Hmm, or maybe it's some sort of debt he feels he owes the Rong Family's eldest daughter and this kid?"

"A debt? Regardless of whether there's a debt or not, this thing is inappropriate. It may not even be a good thing for Su Ping. Who knows what the rest of the Rong Family is thinking?" Su Anyong said with a frown.

Leng Ye chuckled. "Funny to hear you put it that way. Isn't this a Pet Beast egg that might possess Holy Spirit Level Species Potential? You make it sound so worthless!"

Su Anyong said, "The Rong Family originally..."

"Originally was originally! Now is now! What's more important is, you are you! Xiao Ping is Xiao Ping!"

Upon hearing this, Su Anyong was silenced by Leng Ye's rebuttal. He opened his mouth, somewhat at a loss for how to respond.

Finally finding an opportunity, Su Ping asked, "Seriously, can someone tell me, what exactly is this Egg of the Five Saints?"

Su Anyong was silent. It was evident that his unreliable father was genuinely displeased at that moment—dissatisfied with the rash decision made by their nominal maternal grandfather.

Leng Ye explained, "The Rong Family is known as the Five Poisons or the Five Saints Rong Family. Previously, they were quite remarkable in the Dragon Nation. At first, they started out in Dianzang Province and later moved to Beiyuan Province. The reason for this was that the Rong Family discovered a special Secret Realm in Beiyuan Province—a sustainable Secret Realm extremely suitable for poisonous creatures to live in, known as the Five Saints Secret Realms.

"Within these Five Saints Secret Realms, every hundred years, five Pet Beast eggs are produced—also known as the Eggs of the Five Saints. Theoretically, each of these five Pet Beasts has enormous potential, with their highest race limit even theoretically capable of reaching the Spirit Saint Level! And there is a Rong Family rule: the strongest Beast Tamer to emerge from each generation's Eggs of the Five Saints becomes the true Family Head of the Rong Family!"

Su Ping finally understood. So, my maternal grandfather wants to give one of these to me, an 'outsider' who doesn't even bear the Rong surname?

Su Anyong was still frowning and pondering. However, Leng Ye, seeming exceptionally enthusiastic that day, readily answered Su Ping's queries, replying with a smile, "Correct. Tsk tsk, who knows, maybe our Xiao Ping could end up in charge of the entire Rong Family one day!"

Taking charge of the Rong Family? Su Ping had no interest in that and slightly furrowed his brow.

Leng Ye's expression returned to normal. Looking at the father and son, who both seemed reluctant, he said with resignation, "You two really are something... This is the kind of good fortune others can't even dream of, and yet with you, it's as if someone's after your lives! Relax. The troubles of the Families have been largely dealt with, so there's no need to worry about getting tangled in any trouble. The Rong Family has done quite a bit for the Dragon Nation over the years; they're trustworthy."

At this, Su Anyong's expression eased somewhat.

Su Ping's brow was still lightly furrowed.

A Spirit Saint Level Pet Beast egg.

He had previously bluffed that if anyone wanted to set conditions, he would immediately demand a Spirit Saint Level Pet Beast cub.

But in reality, now that such a gift was being offered to him, Su Ping truly wasn't too keen on it.

Too much hassle!

This was evident from the way the other members of the Rong Family had looked at him during the earlier banquet, practically wanting to devour him alive.

As for the possibility that getting too entangled with the Rong Family might lead to the Dragon Nation constraining such Families and hindering his own growth—that was not something Su Ping had considered.

However, Su Ping glanced at his father, and his own furrowed brow relaxed a little.

So, he turned back to Leng Ye and asked, "Then, what's the catch?"

There's no such thing as a free lunch, after all.

Leng Ye smiled slightly. "A maternal grandfather adores his grandson; what price would there be? You're overthinking it, kid. Don't assume the worst of people, alright?"

Seeing Su Ping's skeptical look, Leng Ye then said, "Xiao Ping, you are not an ordinary person anymore."

Su Ping understood, then blinked in surprise. "You know?"

Chapter 602: The Egg of the Five Saints! He managed to get it after all!_2

Leng Ye chuckled and nodded.

Su Ping was even more astonished. "Then, just now, you..."

"I've heard a few things, though I don't know the specifics. Your earlier demeanor just confirmed some of it for me. Regardless, achieving such rewards and results is more than enough. And your little schemes, kid? You think I'm not aware of them?"

Leng Ye smacked his lips, giving him a teasing glance. Clearly, he had seen through Su Ping's little machinations in the car long ago.

That was also why he agreed to let Su Ping accept it. Besides, now that Su Ping had caught the attention of that particular individual, this small matter was hardly significant.

Su Anyong, standing aside with a bewildered expression, looked up at the old man and the young one. What are these two talking about? What do they know? What rewards? What outcomes? Why isn't he an ordinary person? The champion of the Cultivation Competition?

Su Anyong was puzzled, but Su Ping pondered for a moment before asking, "Do you mean Grandfather gave me an Egg of the Five Saints because he also knows?"

Leng Ye shook his head. "That's not it. Apart from those directly involved, few even in the upper echelons are aware of this matter. Even those who know have only a partial understanding. However, your past achievements are more than sufficient!

"In the eyes of certain people, you're quite the rising star! The Rong Family has been suppressed by other prominent families for decades and has long since lost the glory it held a century ago.

"For declining Beast Tamer Families like the Rong Family, if they wish to rise again and make their mark amidst a slight shift in the prevailing winds, they must make attempts. And you, undoubtedly, are one of the Rong Family's attempts.

"For a family like the Rong Family, an Egg of the Five Saints—an item that appears perhaps once a century—is the coveted dream of every eligible young member with the potential to form a contract.

"Now that it has been given to an outsider, they naturally feel indignant. They might even harbor significant animosity towards you.

"However, considering the overall development of the Rong Family and its many members, an Egg of the Five Saints isn't an insurmountable loss. While it is indeed a part of their greatest heritage, you carry half of the Rong Family's bloodline. In any case, this treasure isn't truly going to an outsider!

"Currently, your momentum, your abilities, and your age have attracted the attention of many. The Rong Family betting on you is both reasonable and a move that aligns with the current trends."

Betting. Testing the winds and trends of the upper echelons. So, that's the value and significance of this Egg of the Five Saints.

Su Ping remained silent, understanding gradually dawning on him.

It doesn't seem like such a bad thing after all, does it? And it's true. If it were a bad thing, Leng Ye wouldn't be like this; he would have directly refused earlier.

At this point, Leng Ye finally smiled and said, "So, what do you think? Have you decided whether you want that Egg of the Five Saints, the generous gift your grandfather prepared for you?"

Su Ping didn't rush to speak, and Leng Ye smiled again, saying, "Back in the day, your father was relieved of his duties and returned to the Heart of Woods precisely because of matters concerning your mother. Getting too entangled with a prominent family can indeed be risky, you know!"

Su Ping didn't answer directly but asked curiously, "Leng Ye, why did Dragon Nation take such strong action against the prominent families back then? Since ancient times, these clans with their unique Beast Tamer traditions were considered pillars of Dragon Nation, weren't they?"

"The reason is simple: the nation comes before the family. What if someone were to forget the nation, or even betray it, for the sake of their family?"

Leng Ye didn't need to elaborate further, but Su Ping had some understanding. "Was it like the saying, 'What became of the Six Dynasties? Naught but the selfish schemes of individual houses'?"

Leng Ye nodded, then shook his head. "It was even more serious than that."

Su Ping drew a sharp breath. "In that case, that individual..."

He felt even greater respect for the one who had emerged from such dire circumstances, someone capable of reshaping the era within a mere century.

He wondered how this person managed to seize power and authority under such conditions and then alter the course of history. Such character and methods were truly worthy of their renown. He truly didn't know what kind of person this was and eagerly anticipated the day he might meet and get to know them.

Seeing the shock and admiration in Su Ping's eyes, Leng Ye pursed his lips. He guessed what his god-grandson was thinking and wisely chose not to shatter Su Ping's illusions.

"Of course, the situation has reversed now, and things are a bit different. Besides, the Rong Family was quite compliant back then; otherwise, they would have been wiped out decades ago," Leng Ye stated nonchalantly.

Then, he waved his hand. "Alright, take your time to think about it. It's not too late for you and your father to talk more. However, after today's business is concluded, your father needs to return to the Legion with me early tomorrow morning. I'll come to see you in a few days!"

Su Ping, however, quickly said, "Leng Ye, I have a favor to ask of you later."

"Alright, we'll discuss it later then."

Soon, only Su Ping and Su Anyong, father and son who hadn't seen each other for a long time, remained in the room.

Su Anyong seemed a little uncomfortable with the atmosphere. After standing up and pacing for a moment, he finally said, "You, my boy, don't you have any other suitable Pet Beasts? Hmm, your advancement speed is decent, reaching Commander Third Rank. That's much faster than me. Have you chosen your Third Pet Beast?"

"I have." Su Ping had no intention of summoning Feifei.

That little thing is a bit too... unconventional.

Su Anyong didn't press further. "Then why do you still want that Egg of the Five Saints? It'll take some time to advance to the Monarch rank, right? Let me tell you, don't be fooled by how good your Second Grandpa makes it sound. In reality, even though the Egg of the Five Saints has Spirit Saint Level potential..."

Chapter 603: The Egg of the Five Saints! He managed to get it after all!_3

"But, whether it's the hatching or the subsequent cultivation, it's all very troublesome. Besides, that's just the theoretical upper limit. When it actually hatches, it might not necessarily reach the true Spirit Saint Level!"

It was rare to see his unreliable old dad speak so seriously.

Su Ping chuckled. "It doesn't matter. I never intended to contract that so-called Egg of the Five Saints as my own Contracted Beast anyway!"

Su Ping wasn't lying. He hadn't even considered it; that kind of Pet Beast didn't align with his cultivation philosophy.

Su Anyong was taken aback. "You don't plan to contract it, so you don't want it anymore?"

"Just because I'm not contracting it doesn't mean I don't want it. I'll take it home and raise it for now. Who knows, maybe later I'll want to contract it or find some other use for it?"

Su Anyong looked skeptical. Does he even hear what he's saying? That's a Pet Beast egg that could potentially reach the Spirit Saint Level, not some Forest Wolf he can just raise however he pleases!

However, Su Ping didn't respond to him but suddenly said, "Su Anyong, tell me the truth. What Realm are you at now?"

Su Anyong raised an eyebrow. "Why do you ask? I'm definitely stronger than you, that's for sure."

Su Ping gave this old coot an unfriendly look.

Well, whatever. This old coot was as secretive as an unmarried maiden from ancient times. After all these years, he hadn't revealed a thing, leaving Su Ping completely unaware of what this old coot's Contracted Beasts were.

After a pause, Su Ping continued, "In that case, I'll raise it for now. When you break through to your next Realm and gain more Contracted Beast slots, you can contract it then."

"I..."

Su Anyong opened his mouth; he hadn't expected Su Ping to come out with such a statement.

"You..."

Su Ping directly interrupted him. "Su Anyong, has the Rong Family treated you well? Considering your personality, even so many years after Mom's death, you still seem to be in contact with the Rong Family and on pretty good terms."

Su Anyong fell silent, then nodded, a trace of reminiscence on his face. "Indeed, they were good. The Old Master wasn't against your mom and me. Back then, your dad was just a simple soldier, with a status worlds apart from your mom's.

"To be honest, the first time I visited your mom's family, I was indeed a bit nervous. I was even prepared to say things like 'fortune changes over thirty years.' But the Old Master was always supportive.

"After your mom passed away unexpectedly, he was also very supportive of me. He felt apologetic and guilty that I was implicated by the Rong Family and had to leave the Legion.

"Actually, the Old Master has always been good to you. The reason he hasn't contacted you all these years was also to prevent the Rong Family from affecting your future, as it did mine.

"But this has nothing to do with you. You don't have to accept the Old Master's gift just because of me, nor do you need to get unnecessarily entangled with the Rong Family beyond our blood ties..."

Su Ping, however, didn't seem concerned. "What kind of entanglement is that?"

Su Anyong sighed. "You're like a newborn calf that doesn't fear the tiger. Back in those days, the suppression by the various great families, the rise of every new faction in the country—they all climbed up over the corpses of powerful aristocratic families!

"If it weren't for your Second Master's connections with Ximo, let alone other matters, it would have been questionable whether your dad could have even kept his military rank, or indeed, his life..."

"Nowadays, many people have risen to power through such means. If your appearance becomes linked with the Rong Family, it might stir up talk of an aristocratic resurgence! For you, this could tarnish an otherwise promising future."

Su Ping smiled. "Let alone what Leng Ye said about times being different now compared to decades ago. Even if it were decades earlier, so what? Dad, let me ask you, if you were a Saint Spirit-level Beast Tamer at that time, would your connections with the Rong Family have affected you?"

Su Anyong was stunned, then became furious, slamming his hand onto the table. "You little rascal, still trying to put on airs with your old man? Are you trying to tell me that you're now a Saint Spirit-level Beast Tamer? Are you implying that the reason your dad is such a screw-up and got entangled with the Rong Family is purely because he's incompetent and always looking over his shoulder?"

Just as Su Ping had mustered his youthful arrogance and vigor, Su Anyong slapped it all away. Su Ping instinctively shrank his neck. "That's more or less what I meant."

"So that's what you meant! You little brat, you're incorrigible! Anyway, I'll speak to the Old Master and have him revoke his decision. If you don't want to contract that Egg of the Five Saints, why insist on getting involved in this mess?"

Finding that appealing to emotion and reason was useless, Su Anyong decided to take a hard line.

Su Ping let out a long sigh. "Su Anyong, didn't you give me Xiao Qing from the Rong Family in the first place? So, if I accept this Egg of the Five Saints and give it to you to contract, wouldn't that be perfectly reasonable?"

"Reasonable my foot! A mutated Forest Wolf comparable to the Egg of the Five Saints? Enough of this nonsense. I'm going to find the Old Master."

"Indeed, they're incomparable. Perhaps Xiao Qing is even more precious to me. Hey! Don't go! Wait a minute!"

Su Ping called out to Su Anyong, who was cursing and about to get up, and directly asked him a question, "Su Anyong, let me ask you something. You have to answer me truthfully, swearing on your conscience and on Mom's spirit in heaven!"

As expected, Su Anyong stopped, his gaze turning hostile as he looked at Su Ping.

"Do you currently lack a Contracted Beast? Or, to put it another way, for Mom's sake, do you want to contract one of the Rong Family's patrimonial Five Saints?"

Do I need a Contracted Beast? For Ah Chun's sake?

Su Anyong fell silent for a moment before he finally said, "In a while, I should be advancing to Emperor Level. As an Emperor-level Beastmaster, I indeed haven't decided on my fifth Pet Beast yet. Your mother was strong-willed. However, in her era, the Egg of the Five Saints hadn't yet appeared. Ah Chun once told me that even if she couldn't become the Beastmaster for an Egg of the Five Saints, she wanted you to... Bah, forget it! She only said that because she's gone now. If she were still here, she'd never agree to let you get involved in this mess. Alright, I won't waste my breath on you!"

Su Anyong headed straight for the door. However, just then, Su Ping narrowed his eyes and spoke up again, "Emperor Level... Su Anyong, you've hidden it deep, haven't you?! You're part of the Legion, right? If you're with the Legion, you're a Legion Beast Tamer, which means you're a soldier. And soldiers must obey their superiors, correct?!"

"Hmm?" Su Anyong looked dubiously at Su Ping, whose expression had turned serious. This kid, my superior? Don't tell me he's planning to use Leng Ye to pressure me?

Soon, this puzzled and muttering father of his went from surprise to utter shock.

This was because Su Ping, as if performing a magic trick, took something out from his coat.

It was a golden badge.

The badge featured a coiled Five-clawed Golden Dragon, and an indescribable majesty accompanied its appearance.

Su Anyong stared, dumbfounded, as his son pinned the item to his chest. Then Su Ping spoke, "Su Anyong, as the holder of the Dragon Emblem, I order you: stop looking for trouble! I've already said I'm leaving that Egg of the Five Saints for you to contract. Just obey the order and don't be ungrateful!"

He looked at his smirking son.

Then he looked at the golden badge on his son's chest—the very same emblem he had only ever seen on the Second Master or in restricted photographs.

Su Anyong was bewildered and confused.

But he knew that despite all his precautions, he hadn't prevented it.

In the end, this little rascal had still managed to show off.

Chapter 604: Rong Family's Decision! Enter Heavenly Mountain!

Su Anyong fell silent. For the first time, he looked at his son with resentment.

Now he understood why Leng Ye had seemed so indifferent about this matter.

As someone in the Legion, he was all too aware of what the Dragon Emblem was. But the key question was, how did this rascal get his hands on it?

He had served the Legion painstakingly for so many years, yet the most he had received were awards from within the Legion.

The Dragon Emblem is something granted only to those who have made outstanding contributions to Dragon Nation as a whole.

In most cases, it was only after reaching the level of Breeding Master and achieving the Spirit Saint Level that one might be awarded this badge of honor.

Su Anyong certainly didn't suspect that his own son had faked this thing, because it made no sense.

And besides, most people didn't even know what it was.

So, after a long silence, Su Anyong exhaled and finally asked, "Have you been promoted to Breeding Master? The Breeder Association promoted such a young Breeder to Breeding Master? That's not according to the rules, is it?"

Su Ping nodded, then shook his head. "Not yet. I'm apparently a provisional master; I still don't meet the requirements."

"Then why..." Su Anyong trailed off, staring at the glaring badge, his meaning unspoken.

Could such a thing be bestowed so casually on someone who doesn't meet the requirements? It just didn't seem possible, did it?

Su Ping gave a wry smile but offered no explanation. "I'm just asking you, can I have those Eggs of the Five Saints now? Can you get them!?"

Su Anyong opened his mouth, but all the words he had intended to say were choked back. In the end, he could only manage, "You're awesome! Damn it, this is really weird."

"Hahaha! That settles it!" For them, father and son, Su Anyong's response was the greatest affirmation Su Ping could have hoped for.

Having 'won' a round against this stubborn old man, Su Ping was quite satisfied.

"Alright, I'm off to see Leng Ye. I have something else I need his help with."

Watching Su Ping dash out, Su Anyong, who still hadn't found out from his son where the Dragon Emblem came from, gnashed his teeth in frustration, yet he was powerless to do anything.

「Meanwhile, on the other side.」

In the study of the Rong Family's mansion, two figures sat facing each other.

In front of them, a giant chessboard was placed.

The two were none other than Su Ping's maternal grandfather, who was also the true Family Head of the Rong Family, and Su Ping's maternal uncle.

"Dad, are you really going to give an Egg of the Five Saints to Su Ping, an outsider?" Rong Xia, a handsome man with glasses, asked with a frown.

Rong Bao glanced at his son and said indifferently, "Mind your words. What do you mean, 'Su Ping, an outsider'? He's your sister's son—your own nephew!"

After a pause, Rong Bao removed a chess piece from the board before continuing, "I know you want to secure one of this generation's Eggs of the Five Saints for Mang'er. If you want it, enter the Five Saints Secret Realms and get it. Xiao Ping's acquisition won't affect anything."

Rong Xia was slightly startled. "But Dad, the Rong Family's rules state that within a single lineage, only one..."

Rong Bao replied calmly, "Chun'er married out of the family, so she's no longer considered part of the Rong Family proper. How could Xiao Ping, as her son, count against our lineage quota? Besides, if anyone else has the ability to gain approval and retrieve an egg from the Five Saints Secret Realms on their own, no one would object!"

When it's time for the family to distribute, if anyone in the Rong Family is dissatisfied, let them come and talk to me!"

"But within the Five Saints Secret Realms..." The heavy burden in Rong Xia's heart lifted somewhat, and he breathed a sigh of relief, though he still frowned.

He had absolute confidence in his father's control over the family.

However, the situation with the Eggs of the Five Saints wasn't simply a matter of the old master's word.

The Eggs of the Five Saints require a suitable Beast Tamer to enter the Five Saints Secret Realms, and only those approved by the Five Saints' Spirits can retrieve them.

Indeed, the Rong Family's bestowal of an Egg of the Five Saints usually involved two steps. The first step was what Rong Bao had alluded to: Beast Tamers from every generation of the Rong Family would enter the Five Saints Secret Realms. If they could gain the approval of the Five Saints' Spirits within the realm and independently receive an Egg of the Five Saints, then there would be no objections.

The reason for this was simple: in the hundreds of years since the Rong Family discovered and began developing the Five Saints Secret Realms, the number of young Rong Family disciples who managed to gain the approval of the Five Saints' Spirits and be directly granted an Egg of the Five Saints could be counted on one hand—they were exceedingly rare.

And if someone did receive this approval, the family wouldn't be stingy. Regardless of whether they were from a side branch or the main lineage, and no matter how humble their origins, they would receive focused cultivation.

This policy gave hope to many Rong Family members of low status and little regard, who saw it as their chance to rise.

However, the appearance of an Egg of the Five Saints through this method was infrequent.

Long periods, sometimes a century, could pass without such an occurrence. Even shorter intervals might span several decades, meaning not every generation of Rong Family disciples would encounter such an opportunity.

The second step was the more common procedure.

After the younger generation of the clan had made their attempts, the contemporary Ancestor of the Rong Family would personally intervene to retrieve any remaining Eggs of the Five Saints. These would then be granted to the most outstanding youths within the clan.

The original rules of the Rong Family stipulated that three generations constituted a single lineage. Within such a lineage, two Eggs of the Five Saints could not be granted concurrently, unless the recipient was truly exceptional. Furthermore, if two were indeed granted to members of the same lineage, that lineage was required to split off from the main family.

Chapter 605: Rong Family's Decision! Enter Heavenly Mountain!_2

Great families had many rules, and with them came many troubles. This was the main reason Rong Xia had reacted so strongly when he heard his father wanted to bestow an Egg of the Five Saints upon a nephew he had never met. And now, it was the same. It had to be said, his father's current proposal was somewhat breaking the rules. His sister, Rong Chun, was dead, after all. And Su Ping didn't even bear the Rong surname. Such a matter...

But clearly, glancing at his father's calm expression, it was obvious his father had made up his mind.

Rong Bao also looked at his son. Years of experience had indeed tempered the young man, but he still considered matters too superficially. Moreover, the most important thing was, without the Egg of the Five Saints, it would be difficult for this branch of the family to continue holding stewardship in the future.

"Don't just look at the surface of things, and don't always focus solely on the Rong Family. Su Ping is quite extraordinary! The Rong Family has a blood tie to An Yong—blood is thicker than water, after all. The more contact there is, the more it might benefit the Rong Family in the future. Of course, when young people interact, don't focus too much on benefits. If you do, your words and actions will seem overly utilitarian. Just remember one thing: he is your sister Rong Chun's son, her only son. Your nephew."

Rong Xia fell silent; this time, he had no objections. His eldest son, Rong Mang, was accomplished for his age among the younger generation of the Rong Family. His Beast Taming Realm skills were decent, but he was quite lacking in the aspect of Cultivation.

And Su Ping? Never mind that he was a nephew of the Rong Family; even if he weren't, he should be well received upon arriving at the Rong household. He was the champion of the Cultivation competition, had cultivated a Super-Rank Skill at a young age, Ghost Saint favored him as his god-grandson, Sang Sheng highly regarded him, and he was deeply rooted in Jianghai. This young nephew, the Energy he wielded, was essentially greater than his uncle's, let alone that of his peers.

What his father is doing is indeed correct.

"Yes, thank you for your teachings, Father. I understand!"

"Hmm, if Xiao Ping is around these days, have Mang'er and the younger ones spend more time with him. Let them go out and about in Northern Cold, chat, and entertain him well. Young people, after all, tend to have more in common."

Rong Bao placed a piece on the chessboard.

"Yes. By the way, Father, when will the Five Saints Secret Realms open?"

"Snake Ancestor estimates that in about ten more days, this generation's Eggs of the Five Saints will complete their incubation! We will enter then. I will find an opportunity to tell Xiao Ping, so he can stay a few more days."

"I understand!"

「The next morning, before dawn.」

Su Anyong and Leng Ye left the Rong Family home early. Clearly, managing to take a day off from the Northern Border Legion's affairs at the frontier to accompany Su Ping to the Rong Family had already been quite an undertaking.

However, only the two of them left; one person still remained at the Rong Family home. Of course, this wasn't Su Ping, but Xing Chen, Leng Ye's personal secretary, driver, assistant, and a man of many other roles.

Indeed, after his impressive display with Su Anyong, Su Ping had found Leng Ye again to discuss this very matter. This was the favor Leng Ye had promised Su Ping earlier in the car. Of course, Leng Ye didn't mind. Perhaps even if Su Ping hadn't asked, Leng Ye would have had Xing Chen accompany Su Ping for this period. Leng Ye was still very concerned about the previous assassination attempt. It had occurred on his turf, after all. Moreover, Old Ghost Rong had just spoken about that internal family matter. Although Old Ghost Rong's control over the Rong Family was unquestionable, who's to say there weren't some undiscerning individuals who had been bewitched? Better safe than sorry.

Leng Ye felt assured having Xing Chen stay, and Su Ping did too.

Indeed, for Su Ping, having Brother Xing by his side was, naturally, to prepare for entering Heavenly Mountain the next day. After all, it was a wilderness park. In the Northern Border region, the customs were rustic, and Beast Tamers primarily focused on practical combat. Even hunting wild Pet Beasts in Heavenly Mountain was permitted. Indeed, there were some high-Level Pet Beasts there.

Searching for Biyao Chunshen... Who knew how far he'd have to venture into Heavenly Mountain? Without a powerful bodyguard, Su Ping felt uneasy.

As for whether it would expose his plans? When comparing the possibility of his actions being exposed to Leng Ye versus his own life and increasing the chances of a successful capture, the latter two were relatively more important.

「At daybreak.」

Su Ping was awakened by a gentle knock on the door.

"Cousin Su Ping, are you awake? Grandfather is waiting for you for breakfast."

Opening the door, he saw a young man slightly older than himself. He had inherited Rong Xia's handsome features and had narrow, elongated eyes.

Su Ping remembered him from the dinner table yesterday. He seemed to be the son of his 'cheap' uncle Rong Xia... Rong Mang, was it?

"Alright, I'm coming right now!"

"No worries. Grandfather said it's normal for you to be tired since you've just arrived at the Rong Family home. He'll wait for you."

The way this fellow put it...How could Su Ping possibly delay any longer? Without even time to wash up, he hurriedly followed Rong Mang to the main hall.

Evidently, such an ordinary breakfast didn't involve many people. Only Rong Bao, Rong Qiu, Rong Xia, his aunt-in-law, his two younger cousins, and the silent Xing Chen, who had arrived with Su Ping, were present.

"Xiao Ping is here! Come sit," Rong Bao called out.

Everyone wore smiles, with no deliberate formality or restraint. And truth be told, it really did give Su Ping a feeling of being home, didn't it?

"Now that you've just arrived in Northern Cold, Xiao Ping, if you don't have any plans, where are you thinking of visiting? Your cousin Rong Mang specifically took leave from Bingyuan Academy to come back. If there's anywhere you'd like to go, you younger ones can go with him!" Rong Xia said with a smile.

Su Ping glanced at Rong Mang, nodded, and then said, "I plan to take a trip to Heavenly Mountain!"

"Heavenly Mountain? Cousin, are you looking to experience some wild Beast Taming combat?" Rong Mang smoothly interjected.

Su Ping smiled. "That's one part of it. I called my aunt earlier. My mutated Forest Wolf Pet Beast was supposedly discovered in Heavenly Mountain. I'm very interested in the environment that caused this little fellow's Mutation and want to go investigate. At the same time, I want to perfect Xiao Qing's final Evolution Cultivation theory."

Rong Qiu paused, remembering the previous phone call. So that's what it was about.

Rong Bao laughed heartily from the side. "No wonder Xiao Ping has achieved such accomplishments in Controlling Beasts at such a young age! Mang'er, Zhu'er, Chanchan, in this aspect, you all must learn more from your cousin Su Ping."

Upon hearing this, his youngest cousin, Rong Chan, blinked and asked, "Cousin Su Ping, can you teach Chanchan how to cultivate Pet Beasts? Although I haven't awakened my Talent yet, in the future, I want to become an amazing Breeder like Auntie!"

Looking at the young girl before him, who was only about fifteen or sixteen, Su Ping smiled slightly. "Of course! But becoming a Breeder is very tiring. Chanchan, you have to be prepared, okay!"

"..."

The breakfast was quite harmonious.

The only thing that made Su Ping feel a bit helpless was that after learning he intended to go to Heavenly Mountain, even with Xing Chen to look after him, Rong Bao insisted that Rong Mang and some Rong Family guards accompany them. After all, Heavenly Mountain was not to be trifled with.

After politely declining a couple of times, Su Ping accepted the arrangement. Searching for Biyao Chunshen wouldn't be easy. He'd probably have to stay in Heavenly Mountain for a few days. Even if he found it, he could just send Rong Mang away then. Besides, refusing repeatedly might arouse suspicion.

After they were ready, later that morning, Xing Chen personally drove, leading Su Ping and the Rong Family's escort vehicles. Like profligate young masters of old setting out on horseback, they grandly departed the Beihai City limits, heading south into the Heavenly Mountain wilderness park.

Chapter 606: The Whereabouts of Spring Ginseng! Success on the First Day?

"Heavenly Mountain, one of the largest wild Pet Beast habitats in the Dragon Nation's interior, is substantial even within the nation."

In the car, Su Ping and Rong Mang observed the passing scenery. Rong Mang, smiling, introduced some details about Heavenly Mountain to Su Ping while watching his expression.

"Compared to places like Yunmeng Lake and Kunlun Mountain, which are rarely tread by human feet, Heavenly Mountain, this so-called wild park located within Beiyuan Province, is far less dangerous than the others. Its preservation is purely because the number of Beast Tamers in Beiyuan Province and the Dragon Nation's Northern Border region is relatively low. The entire Beiyuan Province doesn't require that much land or urban development, so preserving such a natural wild park is quite reasonable. Moreover, it's an excellent location for Legion drills and for Beast Tamers to hunt."

Su Ping nodded slightly; his opinion of Rong Mang had somewhat improved. Regardless of whether Rong Mang was feigning ignorance or had genuinely been persuaded by his father or grandfather, his youthful face currently showed no hint of dissatisfaction regarding last night's events. The Egg of the Five Saints didn't seem to affect him much. However, Su Ping knew that as Rong Xia's eldest son, and reputedly one of the most promising young talents of his generation, losing a position for an Egg of the Five Saints would have a tremendous impact on him. Under such circumstances, Rong Mang's consistently warm and enthusiastic explanations, as if he were truly a caring older cousin looking after his younger relative, were already quite commendable.

What surprised Su Ping even more was that as the vehicle slowly made its way toward the Heavenly Mountain boundary, a continuous small town unexpectedly appeared at the foot of the mountains.

Rong Mang continued, "This environment has led to the development of real estate businesses and related industries around the wild park. There are quite a few border towns responsible for supplies. Many Beast Tamers emerge from successful expeditions within the park to trade their hauls in these borderlands."

As he spoke, Rong Mang waved out of the car window, "Uncle Sun!"

The man addressed as Uncle Sun, who appeared to be a captain leading a group in Law Enforcement Office uniforms, chuckled and waved back, "Young Master Rong, here to comb the mountain again, huh? If you find any good resources, be sure to let us brothers take a look and broaden our horizons!"

Clearly, as a scion of the Rong Family, Rong Mang was very familiar with Heavenly Mountain; he had obviously visited many times.

Su Ping nodded. The fact that such an industrial chain could form around Heavenly Mountain indirectly proved the abundance of wild natural resources within it. This also indirectly confirmed that Biyao Chunshen was really here! Wherever Biyao Chunshen existed, local plants would flourish, and Plant Type resources would surge in great abundance! Otherwise, no matter how large Heavenly Mountain was or how rich its resources, it couldn't possibly allow so many people to return fully laden every time, could it? Watching the Beast Tamer adventurers coming in and out of the forest—some with large backpacks, others, more affluent, holding Space Rings and haggling at various stalls along the border—he had reason to suspect this was how the Rong Family had originally obtained Xiao Qing from such explorers. Then Su Anyong had heard about this little mutated creature from the Rong Family and acquired it for him.

Therefore, as soon as they entered the Heavenly Mountain border region, Su Ping summoned Xiao Qing.

"Cousin, that's the Forest Wolf Pet Beast you originally had, right? To think it reached Commanding Rank in less than a year... that's truly humbling," Rong Mang remarked with a smile after a glance.

Su Ping nodded again, though his mind was elsewhere. The model created by Heavenly Mountain's wild environment is actually quite good. If only I could replicate it back home... He shook his head. No, that's

just a Scrooge-like thought, too greedy. Even all of Linzhou isn't half the size of Heavenly Mountain; creating a wild park of this scale within my own territory is impossible.

By the time Su Ping snapped out of his thoughts, the vehicle had reached the entrance to Heavenly Mountain Wild Park, located at the edge of the small town.

"Xiao Ping, we're here!" Rong Mang announced. "Driving inside Heavenly Mountain is quite troublesome, so let's proceed on foot or ride a Pet Beast!"

"Mm."

Ever since arriving within range of Heavenly Mountain, Xiao Qing had grown increasingly agitated. Upon getting out of the car and seeing the vast forest park before it, it let out an excited howl: AWOO!

A Forest Wolf with peculiar emerald fur; the Rong Family's young master, quite famous at the Heavenly Mountain supply station; the Rong Family's escort team of about ten; and a stern-faced man of unknown strength who never left the two young men's side, having summoned a high-level Golden Eagle Pet Beast. Such a group made it clear: the great young master of the Rong Family was out on another excursion, perhaps with a classmate, or maybe with a young master from another prominent family.

Su Ping paid no mind to the peculiar looks from onlookers, instead smiling as he ruffled Xiao Qing's emerald-green fur and head. "Xiao Qing, do you remember this place?"

When he first saw Xiao Qing, the little creature was just a newborn pup, its eyes barely open. Normally, even humans don't recall their early childhood, let alone ordinary Pet Beasts. But Xiao Qing was clearly no ordinary Pet Beast!

Chapter 607: The Whereabouts of the Spring Ginseng! Success on the First Day?_2

It wasn't just any mutated Forest Wolf. According to the markings in the Myriad Spirit Beast Atlas, this was a top-tier Poison-Wood dual-element mutated Forest Wolf, one that had undergone a special mutation using the Legendary Level resource, Biyao Chunshen.

What stands out the most about canine-type Pet Beasts? It's their sense of smell. It's their perception.

Xiao Qing gazed at the vast jungle before her, and at the endless stretch of mountains where the jungle met the horizon, a hint of reminiscence flashing in her similarly verdant eyes. Then, her pink nose, dark against her fur, quivered slightly as if recalling the scent of this place. Eventually, she nodded at Su Ping.

Su Ping ignored the clearly skeptical looks from Rong Mang and Xing Chen beside him. He hurriedly continued, "Little fellow, can you still find the place where you were born?"

"AWOO?"

Xiao Qing tilted her head slightly, then nodded and shook her head.

What did that mean? Su Ping didn't know. However, now that they were here, the Myriad Spirit Beast Atlas clearly stated the reason for Xiao Qing's mutation—Xiao Qing could sense the whereabouts of the Biyao Chunshen within a hundred miles.

Without saying anything more, they might as well go in and see for themselves, right? That's what Su Ping thought, and that's what he did. Not just him; everyone following Su Ping did the same. They stayed close to Su Ping, following him as they ventured deeper into the entire Heavenly Mountain range.

Xiao Qing, the pathfinder, led the way. The rest followed behind.

Along the way, they encountered numerous wild Pet Beasts. Heavenly Mountain truly lived up to its reputation as the largest wilderness park in Beiyuan Province; the chances of encountering wild Pet Beasts were certainly not low. However, as long as the Pet Beasts didn't attack first, Su Ping's group did not provoke them. And with Xing Chen and the others around, indeed no Pet Beast would be foolish enough to cause them trouble. Thus, Xiao Qing's search proceeded smoothly, and Su Ping and the others followed with relative ease.

The mountain roads were steep and rugged, the forests dense and difficult to traverse. They had driven to Heavenly Mountain in the morning and entered its depths before noon, yet they had followed Xiao Qing for an entire afternoon. The sun in the sky had slowly drifted westward. Although not yet set, the afterglow of dusk was already visible.

The group's initial tension and caution had given way to speechlessness. What on earth was Young Master Su thinking? Bringing along this wolf cub, so small at the time of their contract—a little one whose eyes weren't even open yet—to find its birthplace? Wasn't this a clear case of having too much time on their hands? This thought certainly didn't just arise in one person's mind.

At this moment, after walking for the better part of the day, even Su Ping was starting to have doubts. Upon reflection, Xiao Qing had likely been taken from Heavenly Mountain right after birth, a newborn mutated Forest Wolf cub sold to make a quick fortune. Under such circumstances, returning to Heavenly Mountain less than a year later, how could she clearly remember her initial surroundings?

But as a Beast Tamer, Su Ping couldn't offer much help at this point. He could only choose to believe in Xiao Qing. He had to believe in Xiao Qing's judgment and in the power granted by the source of her mutation, trusting that she could now find that very origin.

Finally, as the skies of the Northern Border slowly darkened, even Rong Mang spoke up, "Cousin, Heavenly Mountain isn't safe in the darkness, and it's inconvenient to search. How about we take the flyer back to the supply station and return in the morning?"

Su Ping exhaled slowly. However, just as he was about to nod, a soft Wolf Howl reached his ears.

Xiao Qing's pace slowed, and she looked ahead.

Su Ping was taken aback, immediately understanding. He said directly, "Cousin, you and the others keep watch and guard the surroundings!"

Rong Mang nodded, also realizing that after walking for an entire day—not picking mushrooms or battling Ferocious Beasts, just walking—they had finally reached their destination in this desolate and eerie part of the old mountain forest.

Under the moonlight that hadn't completely succumbed to darkness, Rong Mang and the others spread out. Su Ping, too, finally saw what kind of place this was.

Before their eyes lay a pond surrounded by a ring of trees. It wasn't large, merely about thirty to fifty meters across. Dried branches and yellow leaves rested on the lusterless surface of the pond, casting a serene yet lifeless ambiance.

Su Ping slowly approached, his and Xiao Qing's footsteps pressing on fallen leaves, dry branches, and patches of remaining snow, occasionally creating RUSTLING and CRUNCHING sounds.

This place... was it where Xiao Qing was born?

Had Xiao Qing really emerged from here, more than half a year ago?

Su Ping's gaze swept over the area.

Xing Chen was similarly vigilant, watching the surroundings. The massive Gold Eagle perched on his shoulder was ready to unleash its thunderous power and launch a decisive strike at any sign of disturbance.

However, Su Ping quickly locked onto something. Or rather, it was Xiao Qing's gaze, not his own, that had locked onto something. Because at that moment, even Xing Chen and the Gold Eagle Pet Beast—which Su Ping didn't quite recognize—failed to notice any change or anomaly. But Xiao Qing, through the Soul Contract, had sent him feedback!

Their gazes—Su Ping's and, through their link, Xiao Qing's—were firmly fixated on one thing.

In the very center of this small, deep pond lay an object, something anyone would dismiss after a single glance.

It was an unassuming branch. It looked like any ordinary branch that had fallen from the surrounding trees onto the water's surface. It could hardly be considered any kind of plant resource or the body of a Plant-type Pet Beast; it was just an utterly ordinary branch.

Yet, the feedback from Xiao Qing via the Soul Contract was unmistakably clear to Su Ping: the little fellow sensed that the branch... Could it actually be the Biyao Chunshen?

Su Ping instinctively looked away. After one glance, he didn't dare to look again, afraid his gaze was too intense and might alert whatever was there. But at this moment, Su Ping himself was somewhat astonished.

Could it be this easy?

Had they really found the Biyao Chunshen so easily on their very first day in Heavenly Mountain?

Without time to think further, Su Ping took a deep breath, his movements becoming much lighter. With a mere thought, in an instant, a glow illuminated the area. Qian Yi appeared.

This time, however, the little Paperman made no sound as several smaller Papermen detached from its body and spread out. And these Papermen, at this very moment, each carried a golden panel in their hands.

Su Ping issued direct orders to Qian Yi through the Soul Contract.

Immediately, these Papermen spread out. Even the Water Element Paperman, carrying its large gold panel, stealthily entered the pond.

Then, at Su Ping's command, with Qian Yi and Xiao Qing coordinating, the Papermen shot from all directions with jet-like speed, instantly converging on the dry branch in the center of the pond!

The gold panels slammed together with a mighty RUMBLE, forming a large golden box.

Was it successful?

Su Ping's pupils finally revealed unrestrained excitement as he looked toward the tightly sealed golden box floating above the pond, and at the branch, which seemed not to have reacted in time.

Chapter 608: The Shed Exuviae! Xiao Qing's Flickering Evolutionary Light!

Six Papermen, under Qian Yi's control, rapidly floated over from the pond. They firmly held down their respective golden stone slabs, preventing even the slightest waft of what was inside—or even a hint of its aura—from leaking out. Then, they slowly dragged them to the shore.

Xing Chen's brows lifted slightly. He had seen very clearly: the Papermen Su Ping had summoned just now grasped nothing but a withered branch. There wasn't even the tiniest bit of escaping Energy; evidently, no Energy was contained within. It was just an ordinary piece of deadwood. Is such an item really worth such serious precaution? Xing Chen didn't understand. However, this young ancestor's thought processes were clearly different from those of a normal person. All he could do was watch patiently and see what Su Ping was up to.

Su Ping ignored Xing Chen's gaze. He walked directly to the golden chest and put on a pair of Golden Gloves he had prepared in advance. Then, he opened it and pressed down firmly. A Legendary Level resource! No amount of caution was excessive. Moreover, according to the Breeder Association's backend information—which was very clear and distinct—the Biyao Chunshen possessed a certain level of intelligence and could use various means to escape at any time. According to Master Zhu's previous words, the only thing that restrained it was this gold. Only special metallic resources could imprison this thing. Perhaps it's due to the principle of the Five Elements' interdependence and restraint?

However, there was no violent resistance as Su Ping had expected, nor any display of special abilities. The branch just lay there, as calm as if it genuinely were just an ordinary piece of wood, with nothing suspicious about it.

What in the world is this? Su Ping was taken aback.

SNAP.

The sound of him gripping the branch was incredibly crisp. Even wearing the Golden Gloves, Su Ping could feel from its texture that it seemed to be just an ordinary branch.

And indeed, it was.

Su Ping yanked the thing out fiercely, relying on the hazy light from the sky above and the surrounding flashlights. It was just a branch. From beginning to end, there wasn't even a hint of change. Even when Su Ping held it in his hand, there was no movement!

What in the world is this? Su Ping blinked, looking at the object in his hand, then shook it. Withered bark, yellowed branches and leaves—from any angle, it all proved his observations had been correct.

Su Ping turned his head and looked doubtfully at Xiao Qing, who also appeared somewhat baffled. Is this little thing sure that what we found is really the so-called Biyao Chunshen? His meaning was clear.

Xiao Qing was also stunned for a moment, then let out a soft "AWOO" and moved closer to Su Ping's hand. Its bloodline sensation, the source of its Mutation, constantly told it that the thing before it was the one that had triggered a corresponding call with its bloodline! There's no mistake!

Then what is going on?

Su Ping also furrowed his brow. Watching Xiao Qing pick up the branch in its mouth without any reaction, he finally confirmed that something really wasn't right.

Taking advantage of the moment, Su Ping thought for a bit, then took out his cell phone again. With Feifei around, he didn't need to worry about a lack of signal. He entered the Breeder Association's backend once more and opened the search results and description for the Biyao Chunshen he had viewed earlier.

[Biyao Chunshen: A Legendary Level wood and poison dual-Attribute resource, possessing a certain degree of self-awareness. It is unable to naturally persist for extended periods in a Secret Realm or Beast Taming Space.

It has the special Ability 'Green Demon Avatar,' capable of transforming into any plant body. Some Legendary Beast Tamers and even the majority of Pet Beasts at that Level fail to discern the real from the fake. As such, the Biyao Chunshen is very difficult to discover.

Even when discovered, the Biyao Chunshen can abandon its transformed body at any time and escape in its true form, making it impossible to constrain by most methods.

Currently known Abilities and effects of the Biyao Chunshen:...]

Looking at the description of the Biyao Chunshen, Su Ping slightly narrowed his eyes. He glanced again at the branch Xiao Qing held horizontally in its mouth, feeling somewhat speechless.

He finally understood. This thing might indeed have been the Biyao Chunshen before. But now, it isn't anymore. This completely ordinary branch might have been what the true Biyao Chunshen transformed into at some prior point. However, at some time—perhaps the Biyao Chunshen encountered danger, or perhaps it simply no longer wanted to maintain such a lousy form—it abandoned it and fled. Therefore, in Xiao Qing's perception, this branch might still retain the Biyao Chunshen's aura, but in essence, it isn't the Legendary Level resource at all. It's merely a 'shed skin' of the Biyao Chunshen.

Damn it! After realizing this, all the excitement Su Ping had felt turned into annoyance and speechlessness. But he knew that if Legendary Level resources were so easy to catch, they wouldn't be so rare. Xiao Qing's perception was one aspect, but in the vast expanse of Heavenly Mountain, luck also played a part.

However, thinking about the brighter side, it seems there have been some gains, right? For instance, it's a great consolation that I can now be absolutely certain the Biyao Chunshen is indeed within the bounds of Heavenly Mountain. As long as I persist, I'll find it one day!

With this thought, Su Ping reaffirmed his determination. He looked at Xiao Qing, who was still somewhat confused, and asked via Soul Contract and Psychic Communication, "Xiao Qing, could you clearly sense this branch from a distance?"

"AWOO?" Xiao Qing tilted its head, thought for a moment, then nodded. Then, it shook its head again.

Su Ping's eyebrows raised slightly. "You mean you can sense it, but not from very far? Probably only a few dozen miles? And the sensation isn't that strong?"

"AWOO!" Xiao Qing nodded.

Su Ping pondered for a while before he understood. Indeed, the main body of the Biyao Chunshen and its shed skin are somewhat different. A strong sensation might indicate the main body or its relatively close presence. A weak sensation would mean a situation like this one—just a piece of shed skin, abandoned by the Biyao Chunshen who knows when.

Su Ping nodded. If that's the case, then let's search!

With that thought, he turned to Xing Chen. "Brother Xing, over the next period, I might have to trouble you to follow me and put in some hard work!"

Xing Chen laughed and shook his head. "If wandering around Heavenly Mountain is considered hard work, then what about training in the Legion? Wouldn't that be like descending into hell?"

Su Ping smiled. That's true. The people who can follow Leng Ye are hardly average individuals, right?

However, it's obviously different for the likes of Rong Mang and the Rong Family's guard team.

Just as Su Ping was about to call over the scattered Rong Family guards and his somewhat estranged older cousin, Xiao Qing let out another Wolf Howl, a questioning "AWOO?"

Su Ping turned his head to look at the little guy.

Xiao Qing's meaning was simple: although it hadn't found the Biyao Chunshen yet, what should be done with the thing in its mouth?

Looking at the useless twig still held in Xiao Qing's mouth, Su Ping felt somewhat helpless. He simply waved his hand and communicated via Psychic Communication, You decide.

His Psychic Communication had barely ended when Xiao Qing opened its mouth. Its jaw muscles tensed, and its sharp teeth snapped the dry twig in half. Then, under Su Ping's speechless gaze, it quickly devoured the twig as if it were a piece of dried wood, leaving nothing behind in seconds.

"You little guy, that wasn't even the real thing. Why were you in such a hurry to eat—"

Su Ping stopped mid-sentence, all his movements ceasing as he stared intently at Xiao Qing.

That was right. Just after Xiao Qing swallowed the piece of the Biyao Chunshen's shed twig, something happened to its body.

It was a flash of light.

The light was so brief that if Su Ping hadn't been constantly watching Xiao Qing, he might not have noticed it at all. But Su Ping not only noticed it, he saw it very clearly and distinctly. This light was familiar to him. He had seen it countless times during the Cultivation of Pet Beasts. Yet, almost every time it appeared, Su Ping's spirits would surge with excitement, filled with invigoration.

Because that light was the Light of Evolution!

Indeed, after Xiao Qing swallowed the twig from the Biyao Chunshen's shed skin, a faint Light of Evolution flickered on its body. Even though it was feeble and disappeared in less than a second—and even though Su Ping continued to watch for a full ten minutes, and the light didn't flicker again on Xiao Qing—he was still one hundred percent certain he hadn't been mistaken.

In the process of Pet Beast Cultivation, the best way to identify a new Evolution path is to observe the reaction of the Light of Evolution on the Pet Beast's body during the Cultivation steps. As long as there was a reaction, that Cultivation method indicated that an Evolution was possible. This was most clearly and undeniably demonstrated during Qian Yi's Evolution.

And now, it had finally appeared on Xiao Qing.

Although it wasn't like Qian Yi's situation, where the Light of Evolution flickered constantly at the threshold, almost every few seconds, this single act of consuming the Biyao Chunshen's shed skin indicated something significant. It means that Xiao Qing, which mutated due to the Biyao Chunshen's power, will also evolve when it consumes the residual aura and power from the Biyao Chunshen's discarded parts!

This undoubtedly made Su Ping's eyes shine. He had previously considered enhancing Xiao Qing's Poison and Wood Attributes to promote Evolution. But now it seemed that Xiao Qing's Evolution, at the very root of its Mutation, already had a clear path. And it might even be the best path! The Biyao Chunshen,

a Legendary Level resource with dual Wood and Poison Attributes—what else could give Xiao Qing a more tremendous boost than the essence and aura of this very being!?

While this shed skin of the Biyao Chunshen wasn't the real thing, it obviously contained the Biyao Chunshen's aura. When ingested by Xiao Qing, it clearly had a significant benefit. Perhaps, if I can find enough of the Biyao Chunshen's shed skins, and Xiao Qing ingests enough of its essence, it could push Xiao Qing to the threshold of Evolution?

Search! In the days that follow, even if it means going without food or drink, and even if I can't find the true Biyao Chunshen, I must find all similar shed skins!

Suddenly, under the gradually darkening sky, both Su Ping's and Xiao Qing's eyes practically glowed green with eagerness.

Chapter 609: Return to Northern Cold! The Selection Begins!

[[Mutated Forest Wolf (Contracted)]]

[Attributes: Wood, Poison]

[Current Level: Commander Third Rank]

[Race Potential: Commander Third Rank]

[Skills: Sunlight Absorption (Proficient), Poison Vine Strangulation (Proficient), Self-Healing (Proficient), Accelerated Growth (Proficient), Mutated Poison Wood Heart (Proficient), Poison Flower (Perfection), Grass Roots (Perfection), Life Burst (Beginner), Poison Blast (Beginner)]

The morning sunlight shone down.

Su Ping paid no mind to the brilliant sunlight reflecting throughout the forest.

In his Eye of Truth, he took another look at Xiao Qing's current changes.

He nodded slightly, somewhat satisfied.

From its bold pronouncements in the early days to its current silence, Xiao Qing's growth had become Su Ping's greatest motivation to continue.

Indeed, three days had passed. If it weren't for the Rong Family's incessant phone calls, Su Ping would have almost thought he'd been forgotten by them. During these three days, he had only emerged from his search to rest for a single night, the night before last.

The rest of the time was spent on a relentless hunt.

Within Heavenly Mountain, Su Ping, armed with a satellite map, had conducted what could only be described as a carpet search of the surrounding area. He found several cast-off skins of the Biyao Chunshen, but not a single clue or trace of the Biyao Chunshen itself.

Although Su Ping had anticipated this, after so many days with no results, anyone would inevitably feel some disappointment. He had even prepared himself for a desperate turnaround, hoping a miracle might occur during his final sweep before leaving Heavenly Mountain. Unfortunately, no miracle materialized. By the fourth day of his stay in Beiyuan Province, it was time for Su Ping to return. Fortunately, Xiao Qing's improvements and changes provided him some consolation.

Xiao Qing's realm had broken through to Commander Third Rank in the past few days, a rate of improvement that far surpassed expectations.

However, compared to the advancement in realm, two other changes were the most eye-catching.

Two of Xiao Qing's skills, Poison Flower and Grass Roots, had now reached the Perfection Level!

This was the highest level ordinary skills could achieve.

Such advancement was undoubtedly due to consuming the Biyao Chunshen's cast-off skins over these three days.

There was no energy remaining within the Biyao Chunshen's cast-off skins.

But according to the feedback within Xiao Qing's soul, these cast-offs possessed an indescribable aura that was extremely compatible with Xiao Qing's own essence.

While they offered no increase in energy and no significant rise in realm—to other Pet Beasts, they might be nothing more than useless deadwood—for Xiao Qing, their help was immense, as proven by these developments.

That Xiao Qing managed to bring these two later-learned skills to the Perfection Level in just a few days, under these circumstances, was a testament to their effectiveness.

Moreover, and more visibly, after consuming these found Biyao Chunshen cast-offs, the light of evolution emanating from Xiao Qing shone much more brilliantly than when Su Ping had first observed it.

Clearly, as Xiao Qing consumed more of the Biyao Chunshen's cast-offs, its evolutionary reaction grew stronger.

Of course, there was still quite a difference compared to Qian Yi, who would rapidly flash with the light of evolution and show signs of impending evolution without any additional measures.

But this was actually ideal; after all, the cultivation of the Super-Rank Skill External Incarnation was closely related to a Pet Beast's evolution.

"Cousin, are we finally going back to the city today?"

Rong Mang was in tears. It had been a full three days and nights!

He originally thought his new cousin, who had caught their grandfather's attention upon their first meeting, was merely curious about the renowned Heavenly Mountain and had come for a brief look,

expecting him to stay for a day at most. But he never imagined this visit would stretch into a full three days and three nights.

Although Rong Mang, the young master of the Rong Family, often enjoyed wandering here when he had nothing better to do, relishing the thrill of exploration and finding resources, akin to the simple fun of picking mushrooms during a wilderness survival game, he had hoped to witness his cousin's beast-taming prowess, perhaps even exchange some insights on the topic. Rong Mang had planned to build rapport and share experiences in this regard.

But his "good" cousin wasn't doing any of that.

Even after so many days, Rong Mang still couldn't figure out what Su Ping was up to. All Su Ping did was wander. He just roamed around Heavenly Mountain Park.

Occasionally, when Su Ping found some twigs or similar items, he would seal them away with that strange golden box.

Initially, Rong Mang and the Rong Family guards might have shown some curiosity. But eventually, they became completely numb to it.

Rong Mang had been eagerly awaiting this day of return. Once back at the Rong Family estate, Rong Mang swore he wouldn't trail after this "good" cousin, who seemed a bit touched in the head, on any more aimless wanderings. Even if his grandfather commanded it, Rong Mang was determined to argue his case vehemently. Wasn't all this just pointless busywork? Now, at last, I am free!

Su Ping nodded. He had certainly noticed the resentment in his "affordable" cousin. But he couldn't be blamed for this. He had made it very clear that he could come by himself; this guy had insisted on tagging along.

He greeted Xing Chen and then got into the car.

The reason for his return today was certainly not a sudden prick of conscience on Su Ping's part, offering Rong Mang a chance to mend his ways.

Instead, one of his main purposes for this trip, the selection of Breeders for the Heavenly Tomb Special Elite Forces, was starting today.

With this in mind, after getting into the car, Su Ping once again took out the letter of introduction Zhao Deguang had given him and reread it:

March 16th, Beihai City, Beiyuan Province, Breeder Association Park Complex, Building C-01, second floor.

The selection for this year's Heavenly Tomb Special Elite Forces would take place right here!

At this thought, Su Ping let out a slight breath.

"Brother Xing, let's go!"

「At this very moment, on this very day, others were also making their preparations.」

"Damn it, having Little Xing taken away by that rotten kid really takes some getting used to," Leng Ye muttered, looking at Su Anyong in the driver's seat.

Su Anyong, completely focused, piloted the mechanical aircraft, speeding from the border Legion through the sky towards Beihai City.

He ignored Leng Ye's comment.

Leng Ye didn't mind and continued to grumble, "These Breeders are so damn finicky, insisting on holding the selection in the city. What a hassle."

Su Anyong finally spoke. "Perhaps Master Yin has some unique ideas."

"Ideas..." Leng Ye sneered contemptuously. "That old coot! Facing the Heavenly Tomb, he doesn't even dare let his famed creations like the Spirit Sovereign or the Ghost Nether try out. Instead, he's here to test Breeders selected from various provinces? Hah! Although that Old Witch Demon, Charles, gets more disgusting the more you look at him, you have to admit, when it comes to Undead cultivation ability, he's on par with, if not slightly better than, the old mummy from that ancient mummy nation. Especially now, with what he's gained from the Heavenly Tomb, that Old Ghost might even be a cut above. Yin Luo's rise to Master status owes much to Dragon Nation's relative weakness in Undead Pet Beast cultivation. And that Super-Rank Skill he supposedly cultivated... never mind, let's not talk about it."

Su Anyong glanced at Leng Ye before saying, "Didn't you mention before that both of you are affiliated with the Burial Ground? From the way you're talking, it seems you have quite an opinion of Master Yin?"

"Of course!" Leng Ye knew what Su Anyong was referring to. "It's not that I have any particular issue with him; we're not too familiar with each other. It's just that Charles thoroughly annoyed me recently. And watching that old coot, who clearly isn't as capable as Charles, constantly making a fuss over trivial matters just gets on my nerves."

As for Dragon City, it only has this one Necromancy System Dragon Clan heritage site. The Ghost Dragon and Bone Dragon inheritances both originate from there. What other choice is there? The Four Seas Dragon Palace, the Great Earth Valley, the Five-Color City, the Ancestral Dragon Nest... none of them are suitable for my Great Ghost."

Su Anyong shrugged. He didn't know much about the internal affairs of Dragon City or its many detailed branches.

The only reason he had brought up this topic, about which he was only partially informed, was purely because of another question that concerned him:

"Second Elder, what inheritance do you think Su Ping will choose upon entering Dragon City?"

Leng Ye wasn't surprised by the question.

He had even anticipated Su Anyong's inquiry.

Dragon City represented the pinnacle of Dragon Nation's core power. Choosing an inheritance within Dragon City, based on one's own path, was a matter of utmost importance.

"How would I know? That brat from your family is involved in too many bizarre things. He could choose any Dragon Clan heritage site. It also depends on which Dragon Pet he manages to acquire."

At this, Leng Ye grimaced. From their previous encounters, Leng Ye might normally have hazarded a guess, but now...

Thinking about that strange Paperman, if Su Ping focuses on the Necromancy System, it would be the Dragon Clan inheritance from the Burial Ground.

But if it's based on that peculiar Forest Wolf, and he were to choose a Mu Long or Green Dragon, then it would most likely be the Dragon Clan inheritance from the Five-Color City.

And if it's based on that odd Mental Category Pet Beast Su Ping had when he last departed, should he focus on the Mental Category, then the Jade Dreamland inheritance seems more probable.

As for any other possibilities... Leng Ye had no idea. It was still the same thought: who could possibly figure out such an enigmatic and unpredictable kid?

Coming back to his senses, Leng Ye glanced at him and said:

"Alright, these matters aren't for you or me to worry about right now. The most important thing you need to consider now, as an instructor for the Heavenly Tomb Special Beast Taming Force and one of the examiners for this selection, is to meticulously record everything. We need to determine which cultivation methods are most suitable and most likely to enhance the exploration of the Heavenly Tomb. Once the selection is complete, we must quickly begin the cultivation and training!"

"Yes..."

...

The aircraft traversed the high skies between the Legion and Beihai City, entering the urban area before slowly landing on the rooftop of the Breeder Association Park's Building C-01.

However, neither of them saw that as they disembarked from the aircraft and were escorted from the rooftop towards the second floor by a welcoming party from the Beiyuan Province Breeder Association, Xing Chen had already driven a small car to a quiet stop at the Beiyuan Province Breeder Association building.

Then, two figures, both incredibly familiar to Leng Ye and Su Anyong, after briefly getting their bearings, strode quickly towards Building C-01.

Chapter 610: The Mentor and the Student! Master Yin Wants to Take a Disciple!

"Master Yin! We meet again."

Despite his displeasure towards Master Yin, Leng Ye greeted him. After they arrived in the office, Leng Ye introduced the man beside him, "This is the person in charge of the Heavenly Tomb operation and also the head instructor of the Beast Taming Special Forces this time, Su Anyong."

Su Anyong, looking at the black-haired Master Yin, quickly nodded and reached out his hand. "Master Yin, it's a pleasure to meet you."

Yin Luo smiled and nodded, extending his hand for a handshake.

Clearly, this reaction showed considerable respect to Su Anyong, whose rank was much lower. And it was even more apparent that Master Yin's favorable treatment was not because Su Anyong himself held much prestige.

While shaking hands, Master Yin said with interest, "I heard before that Instructor Su has a promising son. Seeing him now, it seems like the apple doesn't fall far from the tree."

"You flatter me. Su Ping's journey is still long, and compared to an Undead Breeding Master like yourself, he still falls far behind," Su Anyong humbly replied.

Clearly, there was still some time before the start of the Breeder selection, so a casual chat and some mutual flattery were to be expected.

"Instructor Su is too modest. Being able to develop the Heart of the Sun at such a young age in this breeding competition... haha! It has greatly shaken the entire Breeder Association headquarters. If it weren't for Ghost Saint and Sang Sheng speaking up, I would have wished to visit Linzhou myself to see what kind of person this young genius, who has achieved so much at such a young age, truly is," Master Yin said.

Leng Ye watched with a smile as this old man, who was even older than him, skillfully adapted his words to his audience, and finally said, "That kid was just lucky; it wasn't significant enough to cause a stir at the Breeder Association."

"Being lucky is no excuse. The emergence of a Super-Rank Skill isn't something that can be achieved in a short amount of time, even with great luck. Definitely not in a short amount of time."

These words made Su Anyong and Ghost Saint exchange a glance. They were reminded of the events from a few days ago.

It was clear from that boy's words that he must have made some breakthrough with Super-Rank Skills. Otherwise, why would the Dragon Emblem have appeared?

It was important to understand that every Dragon Emblem represented either a Saint Spirit-level Beast Tamer, a Breeding Master, or someone who had made an extraordinary contribution. For instance, the ace special agent from Dragon Nation who had infiltrated Eagle Country—such individuals would be awarded the Dragon Emblem.

So, although Master Yin's words were complimentary, no one would have guessed that such polite praise was actually an understatement for Su Ping.

However, such things were not easy to verbalize.

Moreover, not just Su Anyong, but even Ghost Saint only knew of the matter; they were unaware of the specifics and the inside story. How exactly Su Ping obtained that Dragon Emblem, and the origins of the Super-Rank Skill that might reappear—Ghost Saint knew none of it.

But obviously, Master Yin, this master of the Necromancy System, was not aware of the thoughts passing between these two at this moment.

After pondering, he continued, "I've heard some things before. It seems that this young man's second Pet Beast is also from the Necromancy Series, isn't it? He seems quite interested in necromancy breeding?"

A faint glint passed through Leng Ye's eyes as he glanced at this old man. When he first met Master Yin a few days ago, the man had subtly expressed his interest in Su Ping and even made indirect inquiries about Leng Ye's trip to Linzhou.

What was this old fellow's interest in Su Ping?

Without thinking too much, Su Anyong nodded. "Indeed, Su Ping is very interested in the Paperman, an Undead Pet Beast. His second Pet Beast is a mutant Paperman..."

"A Paperman..." Master Yin's eyes, clear and sharp, narrowed slightly with a glint. "The disgrace of the Necromancy Series, reputed to be the most useless Undead Pet Beast—bar none. This young man's thinking is quite interesting."

Leng Ye suddenly spoke up, "Speaking of which, his mutant Paperman has already completed its evolution."

"Oh?!"

Both Master Yin and Su Anyong were surprised. Clearly, neither of them knew about this.

It was one thing for Su Anyong to be unaware, but Master Yin nodded thoughtfully. "Impressive. Although the evolution of a mutated Pet Beast can sometimes be more bizarre than that of a regular Pet Beast, the Paperman, even as a mutant, must have presented considerable difficulty in evolving."

With this thought, as if having made up his mind, Master Yin then asked, "I also have some accomplishments in the breeding of Necromancy Series Pet Beasts. I wonder, does Su Ping have a mentor?"

At this question, Leng Ye, who had been somewhat puzzled and suspicious, suddenly realized the Old Ghost's intention.

So that's what he was aiming for?

Was he looking to take on a student?

Dragon Nation has had a tradition of apprenticeship since ancient times, which persists in the modern era, having become more modernized and even spread across the globe. In the study and breeding of Pet Beasts, the relationship between mentor and disciple is indispensable.